

“Better”

A look into the context and impact of “*The Letter to the Hebrews*”

BACKGROUND OF HEBREWS:

PURPOSE: That all Christians would trust God’s ways and would have active faith to follow God’s ways rather than what is popular or easy.

Thompson: “*The chief doctrinal purpose of the writer was to show the transcendent glory of the Christian dispensation, as compared with that of the Old Testament.*”)

THEME/CONTENTS: “**Christ is better.**”

Life Application Study Bible: “*The overarching message of Hebrews is that Christianity is superior to Judaism because Christ is supreme and is completely sufficient for salvation.*”

“Better” is the key word, and is used 13 times.

“Faith” is used 32 times.

“Let us” is used 12 times.

“Hold fast” and “Sat down” are also prominent and are used 3 times.

There are many warnings to those who do not embrace (by faith) God’s Ways through Christ.

Written like a sermon

KEY VERSES: 1:1-4; 2:1; 3:1; 4:14; 6:1; 8:1; 10:22-25; 10:38; 12:1-3

AUTHOR: Paul the Apostle, although there are some that would disagree.

It may never be known (until heaven) who the author of Hebrews was.

Gromacki: “*Although the book is nameless, this fact does not detract from the authenticity or inspired authority of its contents.*”

DATE: Between 64-68AD

AUDIENCE: Immature Jewish believers who were wavering in their faith.

LOCATION OF AUDIENCE: Probably a Christian church (assembly of believers) in Jerusalem. Possibly a church in Italy (13:24)

LOCATION OF WRITING: Probably Rome (13:24 – “They of Italy salute you”), but possibly somewhere else.

BASIC OUTLINE/STRUCTURE OF HEBREWS:

(There are elements of both doctrine and application in both parts of the book, but part 1 is...)

1. Chiefly Doctrinal: “Christ is better” (1:1-10:18)

A. Christ is better than the prophets (1:1-3)

B. Christ is better than the angels (1:4-2:18)

C. Christ is better than Moses and Joshua (3:1-4:13)

D. Christ is better than Aaron and the Levitical Priesthood (4:14-10:18)

2. Chiefly Practical: “Because Christ is better, we must...” (10:19-ch.13)

A. Be faithful to God (ch.10, 11)

B. Endure and believe God (ch.10, 11)

C. Focus on Christ even when tempted not to (ch.12)

D. Closing exhortations: Do what is important (ch.13)

OUTLINE:

Theme: Because Christ is better, we must focus on Him, follow him, and have faith in His ways.

I. Christ is Better (1:1-4; 3:1; 8:1)

A. Christ is Better in Person.

B. Christ is Better in Priesthood.

C. Christ is Better in Power.

II. Because Christ is better, we must mature/progress spiritually (2:1; 4:14; 6:1)

A. We must grow up spiritually.

B. We must move on spiritually.

III. We can grow up and move on spiritually by having faith in God’s ways... Faith in Christ! (10:22-23, 38)

These passages in Hebrews show us that spiritual growth is directly connected to deeper faith.

A. We must have faith in God's Way (Christ) (10:38)

- Trusting God's way in every circumstance of our lives
- Putting God's way first in every circumstance of our lives.

B. We must have focus on God's provision of Christ. (12:1-3)

C. We must follow after Christ's ways. (12:12ff)

- Embracing God's ways bring blessing.
- Ignoring God's ways bring punishment.

SO WHAT? (CONCLUSION)

"Faith that is deep, will result in service that is dedicated" (12:28).

Do I follow God's way by faith? ...In the areas of...